# Privacy Awareness

## Key Concepts

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| 1. | PII broadly covers any information that identifies an individual, or is related to or traced back to an individual person. Sensitive PII requires special handling and safeguarding to protect individual privacy. |
| 2. | Agencies that maintain a Privacy Act system of records on individuals must publish a SORN in the *Federal Register.* Employees should consult with their supervisor and APO if they suspect they may be operating a Privacy Act system of records that is not covered by a SORN. |
| 3. | The Privacy Act grants individuals the right to access and correct agency records maintained on themselves upon a showing that the records are not accurate, relevant, timely, or complete; subject to certain exemptions. |
| 4. | Employees must ensure sharing of Privacy Act records is authorized and appropriate; and any sharing with third parties is with the individual's written consent or in accordance with a Privacy Act exception or the "routine uses" covered by a SORN. |
| 5. | Employees and contractors must comply with the Privacy Act, DOI Privacy Act regulations, DM chapters, and other privacy laws, regulations and policies on privacy protection. |
| 6. | Refer requests for agency records that you receive from individuals or organizations to your Bureau/Office FOIA Officer. |
| 7. | A PIA must be conducted on agency IT systems, programs, and projects that collect, create, maintain, process, use, disseminate or dispose of PII to identify and assess privacy implications and ensure adequate privacy controls are implemented to protect PII throughout the information life cycle. |
| 8. | Employees must be vigilant and security conscious whenever using equipment or media such as a laptop, flash drive, or external hard drives. Sensitive PII must be encrypted and safeguarded during storage, transmission, telework, and travel. |
| 9. | Sensitive PII, such as Social Security numbers and credit card numbers, may only be sent outside the DOI network or physical environment when properly encrypted. |
| 10. | Employees must IMMEDIATELY notify DOI-CIRC, IT helpdesk, and their supervisor of any suspected or confirmed privacy breach, whether electronic, oral or paper based. |
| 11. | Failure to properly safeguard PII can result in financial and legal consequences for the Department and for the employee, including civil and criminal penalties under the Privacy Act, and disciplinary action for employees. |